



AGENDA ITEM No.2

CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

333 West Ocean Blvd., 3rd Floor, Long Beach, CA 90802 (562) 570-5237

July 8, 2019

CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS

City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

To receive and file presentation, hold discussion and provide project guidance to applicants as it relates to Certificate of Appropriateness findings and Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

REQUEST

Staff requests the Cultural Heritage Commission hold a Study Session to review a proposed project at 4242 Pine Avenue. The property is a designated historic landmark building known as the Henry Clock House (Exhibit A -Landmark Ordinance and Department of Parks and Recreation Form).

BACKGROUND

The landmark designated Clock House was originally constructed in 1933 and designed by architect Kirtland Cutter. The two-story Monterey Revival style house is generally intact and well preserved. A Mills Act contract was executed and recorded in 2006 for this property and the contract is still in effect. The proposed work is not a workplan item associated with their contract.

Staff has been working with the applicants on a proposed project that consists of installing an elevator shaft on the front elevation of the landmark building (Exhibit B - Plans and Color Rendering). Staff has recommended that the elevator either be in a location where it is completely internal to the building with no exterior alteration, or externally but in a less visible location than the front elevation of the building.

The projection of the elevator shaft would be roughly the size of the elevator car, approximately 7' feet x 7' feet for the full two stories. As proposed by the applicant, the exterior of the elevator shaft would be treated in stucco and painted to match the color of the existing building. To make the elevator shaft more architecturally compatible, the architect has proposed a window on the upper story of the vertical elevator shaft to add fenestration, and a simple hip roof with red tile to match the existing roof.

DISCUSSION

The applicant's architect has prepared an alternative analysis plan identifying potential elevator location on the floor plan (Exhibit C – Elevator Location Study). This plan is intended to demonstrate that alternative location was studied, but for varying reasons were deemed to be infeasible or undesirable by the applicant. The reasons for disqualification of the alternative location for the elevator are coded on the plan but generally consist of the following reasons:

- Access would be taken from a non-public space within the house;
- It would encroach into existing usable floor area of the house;
- It would interfere with exiting circulation;
- It would negatively impact the interior character of a room and/or would block views;
- It would increase the number of vertical stops;
- It would not be centrally located;
- It would have impacts to an exterior elevation

One location on the alternative analysis plan is identified as the "City Preferred Location" and labeled with the letter "H" and highlighted in yellow. This location was initially identified by staff as a suitable location since it would be located behind and be screened by the second floor. However, all alternative locations studied are in the staff analysis preferable to the proposed location since they would involve little to no alteration to the front elevation. Some of the locations within the interior of building, with some adjustments to the floor plan, could easily accommodate the elevator without changes to the building exterior and as a result need no additional review by this Commission or Planning Bureau staff, since no exterior changes would occur. The applicant objects to the City's preferred location because of the negative affect it would have on the room's wood paneled interior. However, the interior of the building is not protected by the landmark designation and can be modified.

Staff is not supportive of to the location on the front building wall because it alters the front façade which is the most highly visible portion of the building and is the most protected part of the building. The proposed location is next to the staircase and near the front door. There are alternative locations that are acceptable that cause little or no change to the exterior appearance of the building, are not contrary to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and would be consistent with the property's Mills Act obligations.

This property is currently under the Mills Act program and it is important to emphasize the obligations of this property under the program. The Mills Act is a state law that allows owners of historic properties to enter into tax abatement contracts with the City. Property owners agree to restore and rehabilitate their historic property in exchange for a property tax reduction which can be substantial and can result in a 30%- 50% property tax deduction annually. Owners of a Mills Act property are contractually obligated to preserve the exterior character of their designated historic building and all future alterations should be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Staff's

and as a result is not in compliance with the terms of the property owners Mills Act contract.

Secretary of the Interior's Standard #2 and 3 states the following:

Standard #2 - "The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided."

The addition of an elevator to the front wall will not retain historic character and, in order to be placed in the applicant's desired location, will remove original windows along the front façade. The project also modifies the front façade by creating a 7-foot protrusion from the building, that was historically setback. This modifies and flattens the front building plane and alters the building. It also requires removal of three original wood windows and second floor corbels.

Standard #3 - "Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural element from other buildings, shall not be undertaken."

The project would not preserve the building as a physical record of its time. The reason the front elevation is so important in historic preservation is that the physical record is typically the most significant in this elevation, which is also the visible and prominent part of the building (i.e. most visible by passersby from the street). Adding the elevator creates a false sense of historical development. The addition of the elevator shaft breaks the plane of the original roof line and adds a roof line that creates a false sense of history but also substantially alters the space that characterizes the front elevation. The front façade is characterized by the cross gable roof, protruding building ends and the recessed center of the building where the elevator would be placed in the nook abutting the front entry. This would result in a 7-foot projection from the face of the wall that would extend above the roof line which will completely alter the relationship of space between the two building planes.

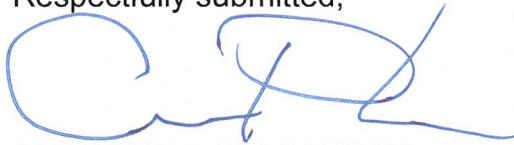
As both staff and the applicants are at point of impasse, its recommended that the Cultural Heritage Commission hear a presentation from the applicants (Exhibit D – Applicant PowerPoint) and provide feedback and guidance as it relates to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

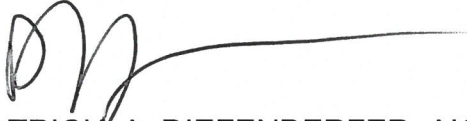
July 8, 2019

Page 4 of 4

Respectfully submitted,



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CK: PAD:AP

Attachments: Exhibit A – Landmark Ordinance & Department of Parks and Recreation Form
Exhibit B – Plans & Color Rendering
Exhibit C – Elevator Location Study
Exhibit D – Applicant PowerPoint